

INFORMATION REPORT
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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COUNTRY Indochina

DATE DISTR. 30 JAN 50

SUBJECT Conditions in Ho Chi Minh-Controlled Area of
Central Annam

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1. Although the French hold the immediate area of the city of Hue, the Ho Chi Minh Government controls all of the surrounding territory. It is possible for a Vietnamese to pass in and out of the city provided he can avoid running into the French and provided he can prove to the Ho Chi Minh forces that he has not worked with the French. Demonstrable proof of this is usually a paper issued by the Viet Minh which can be comparatively easily obtained by a contribution to the Viet Minh coffers. [redacted] visited members of his family who live outside of Hue in Ho Chi Minh-controlled territory. Once outside the city of Hue, [redacted] was blindfolded and taken some distance before the blindfold was removed. The men with whom he talked and who treated him well, wore masks, false beards and moustaches, and wigs, etc., to avoid identification. They did not try to threaten or intimidate him but tried to instill into him the usual Viet Minh propaganda line of how they were all working for the ultimate goal of ridding the fatherland of the enemy and suggested that his efforts be constructively directed toward the same end. The morale of these individuals was good and they were fully confident of the ultimate success of the Ho Chi Minh regime.
2. Conditions in the Ho-controlled areas around Hue are comparatively good. There is apparently plenty of food, including milk and butter. The area has electricity with lights, fans, and refrigerators. Medicines, however, are badly needed and most of the people are badly-clothed. The schools and other institutions are functioning efficiently, according to Vietnamese standards. The Ho Chi Minh Government piastre interchanges readily with the piastre of the Bank of Indochina at the rate of six Ho piastres for one of the Bank of Indochina.

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